



Connecticut School-Based
Diversion Initiative

Enhancing Supports to Reduce School-Based Arrests: The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Jeana R. Bracey, PhD

Child Health and Development Institute

February 23, 2017



Background

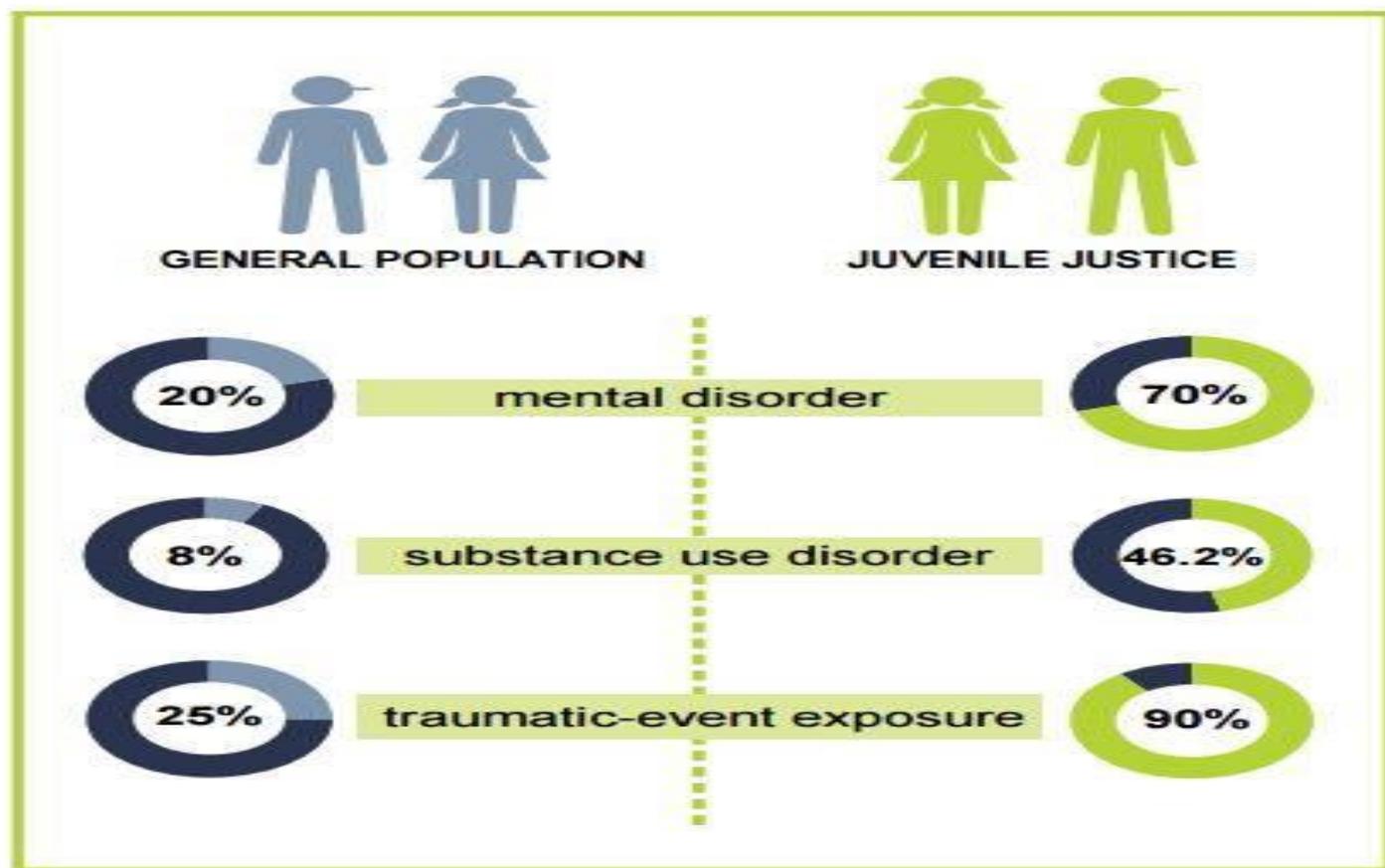
Fewer juvenile court referrals, *proportion* from schools continues to be high

- Approximately 20% of all CT juvenile court referrals

High rates of unmet mental health needs and academic risk among youth who are arrested or expelled

- 20% of children meet criteria for MH diagnosis (160,000 youth in CT)
- Rates are 65-70% among youth in juvenile detention
- 80-90% in detention w/ significant trauma exposure
- Students arrested are 2x as likely not to graduate; increases to 4x if processed through court

Trauma Exposure and Behavioral Health Needs



Prevalence of Mental and Substance Use Disorders and Traumatic-event exposure among Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

Source: National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice

Development of SBDI

- 2008: MacArthur Foundation Models for Change Mental Health Juvenile Justice Action Network facilitated by NCMHJJ
- 2009: Pilot SBDI in 3 schools
- 2010: State agencies sustained by sharing cost, blended funding with collaborative oversight
- 2013: Expanded partnership as evidence increased, tied into larger education and criminal justice reforms
- 2015: Statewide expansion in Governor's biennial budget under the "Second Chance Society"

SBDI Goals

- **Reduce** the number of discretionary arrests in school; reduce expulsions and out-of-school suspensions
- **Build** knowledge and skills among teachers, school staff, and school resource officers to recognize and manage behavioral health crises in the school, and access needed community resources
- **Link** youth who are at-risk of arrest to appropriate school and community-based services and supports

SBDI Core Components

Professional Development

- Training and Workgroups

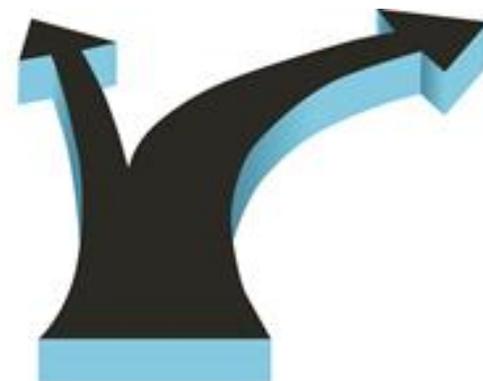
Referral and Service Coordination

- Mobile Crisis Intervention Services
- Systems of Care

Discipline Policy Consultation

- Graduated Response Model
- Restorative Practices

Implementation Guided by SBDI Toolkit



**Connecticut School-Based
Diversion Initiative**

Professional Development

Goal: Enhance knowledge, attitudes, and skills among school staff to support arrest diversion principles and practices

Training and Workgroup Modules include:

- Crisis De-escalation and Effective Classroom Behavior Management
- Understanding Adolescent Development and Recognizing Child Trauma
- Effective Collaborations with EMPS Mobile Crisis and Care Coordination
- Multicultural Competence in the Schools and DMC
- Understanding and Partnering with the Juvenile Justice System and Local Law Enforcement
- Engaging Parents of Youth with Mental Health Needs
- Promoting School Climate and Connectedness
- Incorporating Restorative Practices

Engage Statewide Learning Community

Referral and Service Coordination

Goal: Reduce burden placed on schools to address mental health concerns

Community coalition-building

- **Family members and students**
- **Family Advocates**
- **Youth Service Bureaus**
- **Juvenile Review Boards**
- EMPS Mobile Crisis Intervention Services
- Care Coordination
- Pediatric primary care providers/SBHCs
- Local police departments/SROs
- Juvenile Probation Officers and Courts
- Community Collaboratives (SOC)
- Local Interagency Service Teams (LISTs)
- Disproportionate Minority Contact Committees



EMPS Mobile Crisis Intervention Services

Component of CT's behavioral health system

- Funded and managed by DCF
- Available FREE to all CT children

Access: Dial 2-1-1

- Phone support 24/7, 365
- Mobile hours M-F 6am-10pm;
- Weekends/holidays 1pm-10pm

Rapid response to behavioral crises

- 90%+ mobility rate
- On site in 45 min. or less

Crisis stabilization, assessment, brief treatment, linkage to ongoing care



Discipline Policy Consultation

Goal: Examine and revise disciplinary policies and practices where needed to support diversion efforts

- Convene a workgroup, ideally building off an existing in-school team to develop a Graduated Response Model
- Include **restorative practices** in disciplinary approach to build community and provide alternatives to exclusionary practices
 - Training and implementation support for Circle Process and Restorative Conferencing



Law Enforcement Engagement

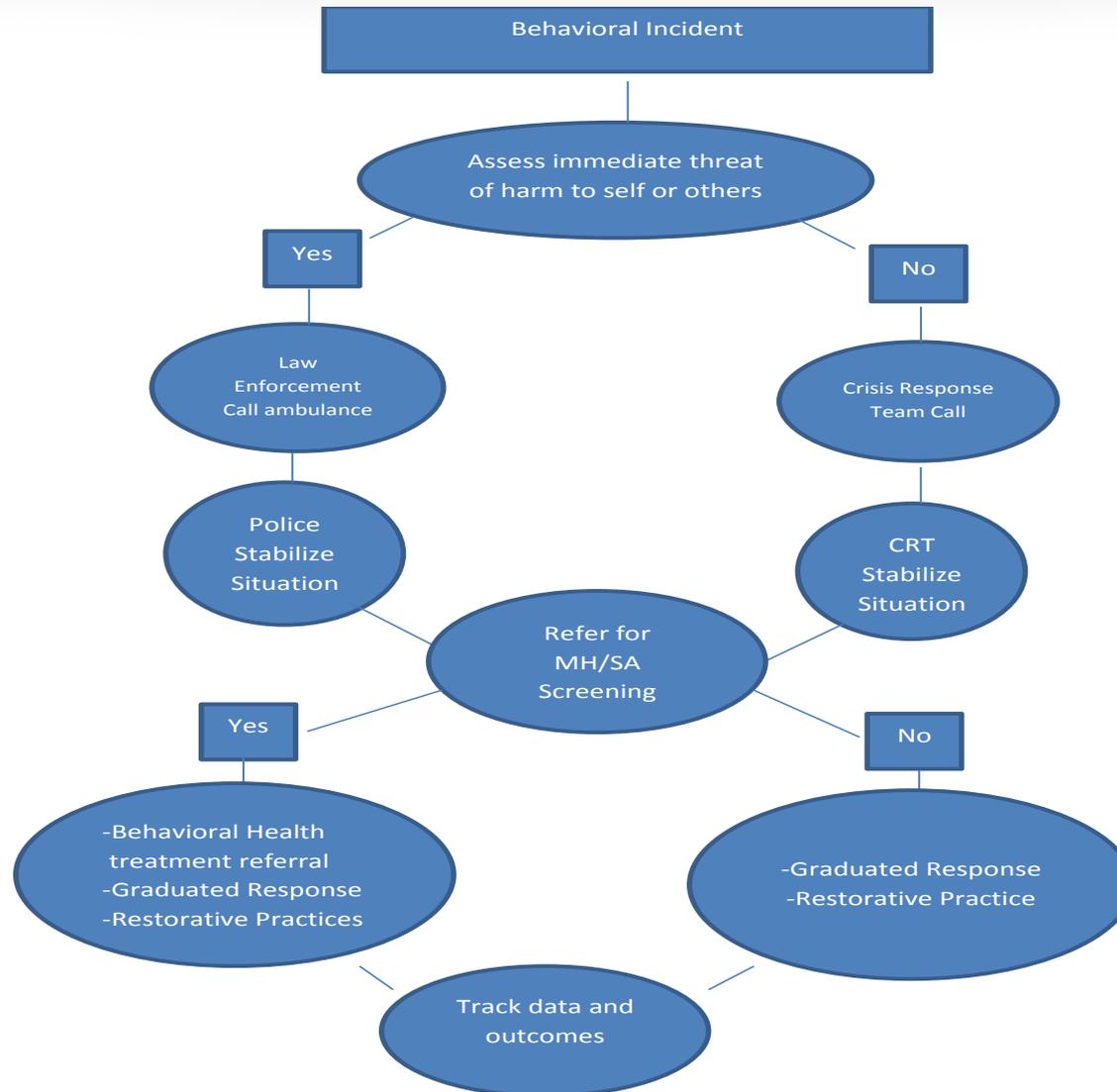
- A school-police Memorandum of Agreement(MOA) addresses behavioral incidents through strategies that encourage and support diversion from the juvenile justice system without compromising school safety.
- Partnership to provide Crisis Intervention Training for Youth (CIT-Y)
- Disproportionate Minority Contact Committees(DMC)



Graduated Response Model

SAMPLE		Behavior	Strategies
Level 1	Classroom Intervention	Excessive talking; School policy violation	Redirection; Parent conference
Level 2	School Administration Intervention	Disruptive behavior; Verbal student conflict	Mediation; Restorative Conference
Level 3	Assessment and Service Provision	Inappropriate behavior; Insubordination	Crisis response team; Community supports
Level 4	Law Enforcement Intervention	Weapons violation; Drug possession	Diversion; Juvenile Review Board

Sample Diversion Algorithm



Data Informed Decision-Making

School and community-level baseline and outcome indicators

- Rates of arrest
- Disciplinary referrals and outcomes
- Student characteristics
- Community-based service referrals



Data tracking helps identify patterns, highlight improvements, address challenges, and plan for sustainability

Data Informed Decision-Making

Identify schools with the highest number of arrests, suspensions, and expulsions

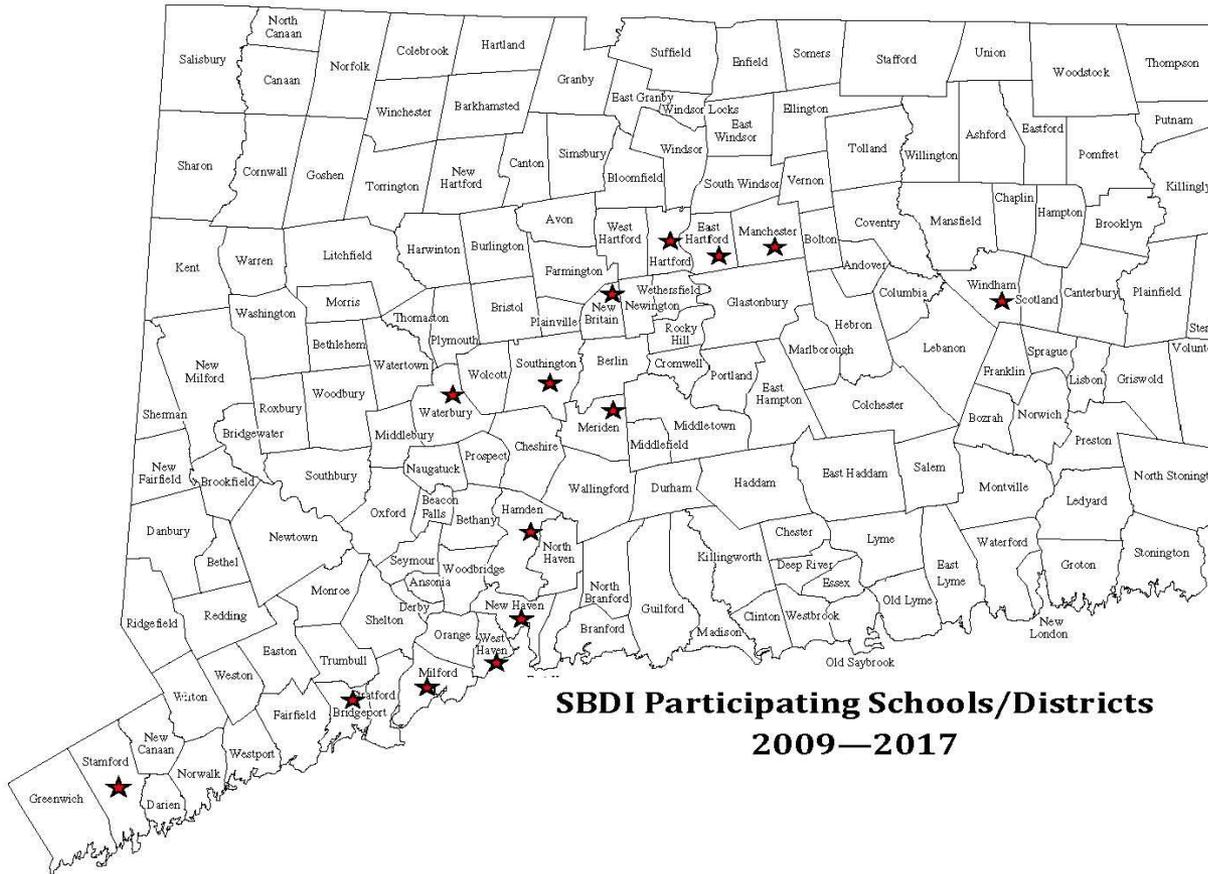
- Need, Interest, Capacity
- Identify rates of arrest per 1000 students

Review arrest data for disproportionality

- Demographic characteristics
- Types of incidents or charges (BOP, Assault 3rd, DC, Threat)

Assess rates of change over time

Participating Schools



**SBDI Participating Schools/Districts
2009—2017**

Bridgeport Public Schools

- Luis Muñoz Marin School
- Curiale School
- Harding High School

Consolidated School District of New Britain

- New Britain High School

CT. Technical High School System

- A. I. Prince Technical High School (Hartford)
- Eli Whitney Technical High School (Hamden)
- H.C Wilcox Technical High School (Meriden)
- Platt Technical High School (Milford)

East Hartford Public Schools

- East Hartford High School
- East Hartford Middle School

Hartford Public Schools

- Academy of Engineering and Green Technology at Hartford Public High School
- Culinary Arts Academy at Weaver High School
- Sarah J. Rawson School

Manchester Public Schools

- Illing Middle School
- Manchester High School

Meriden Public Schools

- Maloney High School

- Orville H. Platt High School
- Venture Academy

New Haven Public Schools

- New Horizons School
- Augusta Lewis Troup School
- Wilbur Cross High School

- Barnard Environmental Studies Magnet School

Southington Public Schools

- Kennedy Middle School
- Joseph A. DePaolo Middle School

Stamford Public Schools

- Cloonan Middle School
- Westhill High School

Waterbury Public Schools

- Crosby High School
- Enlightenment School
- Kennedy High School
- North End Middle School
- Wallace Middle School
- West Side Middle School
- Wilby High School

West Haven Public Schools

- West Haven High School
- Bailey Middle School
- Carrigan Middle School

Windham Public Schools

- Windham High School



Child Health and Development Institute of Connecticut, Inc.

Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Referrals to Behavioral Health Service

UP 94%

Among the first cohort of 18 schools completing SBDI (2010-2015), court referrals decreased by 45% and EMPS referrals increased by 94% in their first year of participation.

School-Based Court Referrals

DOWN 45%

The Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative is helping transform school discipline and improve student outcomes. Instead of arresting and suspending children with behavior problems, SBDI schools are connecting them to community-based behavioral health services.

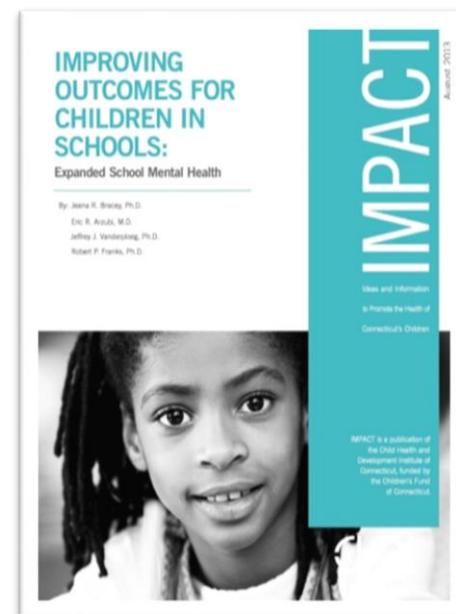
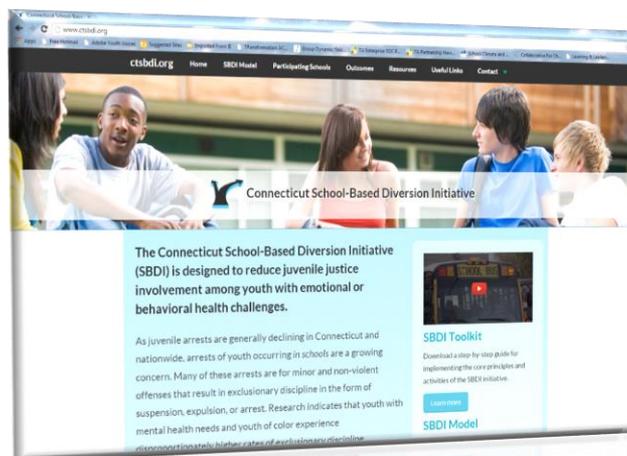
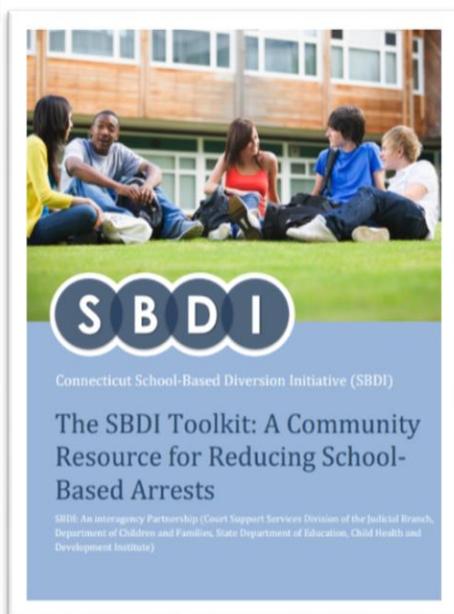
Learn more at:
www.ctsbdi.org
www.chdi.org/sbdi

Connecticut School-Based Diversion Initiative

Core Components of a Basic Diversion Model

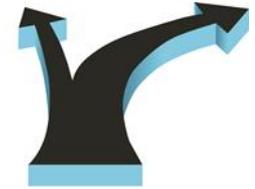
- School-Community-Family Workgroup
- Professional Development
- School Discipline Policy Consultation
- Crisis Response Team (could be school-based or community-based like EMPS)
- Behavioral Health Screening (administered by school personnel ideally)
- Access to Behavioral Health Services (school and community-based)
- Restorative Practices
- Data Collection and Evaluation

SBDI Resources



Available for **free download** <http://www.chdi.org/SchoolToolkit>

Additional resources available at <http://www.ctsbdi.org> and <http://www.chdi.org>



**Connecticut School-Based
Diversion Initiative**

Contact Us

Jeana R. Bracey, Ph.D.

Director of School and Community Initiatives

bracey@uchc.edu

www.ctsbdi.org